

Press release

## **MANAGING THE CHALLENGES OF A REGION IN TRANSITION: NIGER, LIBYA, SUDAN AND CHAD**

The 4S Centre and Promediation are organising a high-level seminar in Niamey on February 23 and 24, 2022 on the regional reconfiguration of the Eastern Sahel (Libya, Chad, Sudan, Niger) at a time of great danger for the region: disputed political transitions and contested elections in Libya, Sudan and Chad; difficult negotiations and demobilisation of armed groups; the departure of Barkhane forces from Mali, etc. The sixty decision-makers and participants, hand-picked for their interest and experience in the area, will discuss these challenges and suggest solutions for a region undergoing profound change.

**Paris, Niamey, 22 February 2022** - The Centre for Strategies and Security for the Sahel and the Sahara (4S Centre) and Promediation are organising a high-level seminar entitled "The Challenges of a Region in Transition: Niger, Libya, Chad and Sudan" bringing together some sixty high-level personalities from Libya, Chad, Sudan and Niger to discuss the challenges of a region in transition with decision-makers, researchers, civil society representatives, diplomats, economic actors, mediators, think tank representatives and field actors.

*"The multiplication of political transitions in the Sahel and the departure of Barkhane from Mali make it necessary to think about the future of the region. To do this, we are offering decision-makers, researchers and field practitioners a unique space for exchange, dialogue and reflection in the heart of the Sahel. This is a crucial moment for our region and it is important that all the decision-makers present discuss and put forward peaceful solutions to make our region a safer place,"* said Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, President of the 4S Centre.

This seminar in Niamey, focusing on the transitional areas of the Eastern Sahel, is the new formula of the 8th edition of the Maghreb-Sahel Seminar organised by Promediation and the 4S Centre, which for nearly 10 years has offered decision-makers, field actors, researchers, diplomats and civil society a unique space for exchange and dialogue. Several senior political and security figures from Libya, Sudan, Chad and Niger are expected to attend.

The crisis in Libya has represented a challenge for the stability of the entire region for more than 10 years, as illegal migration and smuggling feed cross-border criminal networks and rebel movements and extremist groups move between Libya, Sudan and Chad. The reconfiguration of the European forces present in the Sahel, while these countries are undergoing high-risk political transitions, raises questions on the future of the region. The

authorities of Libya, Niger, Sudan and Chad are well aware of the political, and cross-border security issues faced by their countries and have been trying to strengthen regional cooperation in this regard.

This seminar aims to promote reflection on the common challenges faced by the states in the region and cooperation efforts, focusing on the specific dynamics of the fragile cross-border areas between Libya, Niger, Sudan and Chad. This shared diagnosis will draw on the diverse experiences and perspectives of policy makers, diplomats, researchers and local actors in order to better understand local and regional realities and formulate concrete proposals.

*"The meetings and seminars that we have been organising for almost 10 years are opportunities to discuss, find solutions and sometimes conclude agreements, truces and even peace that seemed unthinkable. This area of the Eastern Sahel is subject to enormous pressures and challenges (return of armed groups, internal political dialogue, migration and cross-border trafficking) that must be managed. Through this seminar, we are contributing to pushing the actors into non-conflictual logics, towards political processes and positive dynamics. This is the role of the mediator,"* said Eric Blanchot, Director General of Promediation and mediator.

**Promediation** is a non-profit NGO, bringing together professional mediators and experts in the field of mediation, negotiation and conflict and political crisis management who combine mediation skills with extensive field experience. Promediation is active in Africa, the Maghreb, the Near and Middle East.

The 4S Centre (Centre de Stratégies et de Sécurité pour le Sahel et le Sahara) is a research centre based in Nouakchott (Mauritania) founded and directed by Ahmedou Ould Abdallah. He is a former ambassador, former representative of the UN Secretary General for West Africa and current OIF special representative for Chad.

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